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Message Text

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20
ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-11 INR-10 LAB-06

NSAE-00 RSC-01 SIL-01 FPC-01 DRC-01 /050 W
---------- 001099
R 240835Z JUN 74
FM AMCONSUL DURBAN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1745
INFO AMEMBASSY PRETORIA
AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG
AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN 1296

UNCLAS DURBAN 0222

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: ELAB, SF
M
SUBJ: STRIKE BY AFRICAN POWER STATION WORKERS

1. 300-MAN AFRICAN LABOR FORCE STRUCK SAG ELECTRICITY SUPPLY COMMISSION'S (ESCOM) HUGE POWER STATION IN PINETOWN JUNE 19 FORPONE DAY. STRIKERS DEMANDED REINSTATEMENT OF FIRED WORKER AND WAGE INCREASES.

2. FIRED WORKER WAS MEMBER PLANT WORKS COMMITTEE WHICH HAD EARLIER ASKED FOR RISE TO OFFSET INCREASED COST LIVING. RISE REFUSED AND, ACCORDING WORKERS' SPOKESMAN, POWER STATION FOREMAN THREATNED FIRE ENTIRE AFRICAN MEMBERSHIP WORKS COMMITTEE. ONE WAS ATUALLY FIRED FOR ALLEGED "INSUBORDINATION".

3. SMIKERS RETURNED WORK JUNE 20 FOLLOWING MEETING WITH CENTRAL PERSONNEL MANAGER WHO FLEW DURBAN FROM JOHANNESBURG. HE PROMISED MEET WITH COMPANY OFFICIALS EARLY JULY TO DISCUUS WAGE DEMANDS AND WITH WORKS COMMITTEE TO DISCUSS FATE FIRED MEMBER. CRUCIAL POWER SUPPLY TO PINETOWN-NEW GERMANY INDUSTRIALV Y
DPOT INTERRUPTED DURING BRIEF STRIKE.

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4. COMMENT: THIS STRIKE AGAIN GRAPHICALLY DEMONWTRATES

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INEFFECTIVENESS WORKS/LIAISON COMMITTEE SYSTEM. WHEN
MANAGEMENT CAN FIRE WORKERS' REPRESENTATIVES FOR TRYING
EXERCISE THEIR RZSPONSIBILITIES ON COMMITTEE, AS IN THIS
CASE, ONLY RECOURSE LEFT TO WORKERS IS TO STRIKE.

5. ALTHOUGH STRIKE WAS APPARENTLY PVECIPITATED BY FIRING,
WAGE DEMAND WAS VALID TOO. MINIMUM STARTING SALARY AT PLANT
WIS R66 MONTHLY. THIS WELL XELOW UNIVERSITY NATAL CURRENT
POVERTY DATUM LINE OF R111, OR EFFECTIVE MINIMUM LEVEL OF
R166. NEVERTHELESX, ESCOM PUBLIC RELATIONS OFFICER IN
JOHANNESBURG QUOTED AS SAYING R66 WAGE WAS "AS GOOD AS ANY
PAID IN SOUTH AFRICA."
HOLMES

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NNN

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